



# MARSHAL MATTERS

## SEPTEMBER 2019 EDITION

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## Marshal's Minute-State Fire Marshal Matt Perez



The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is honoring National Fire Prevention Week 2019. Governor JB Pritzker has proclaimed October 6<sup>th</sup> through October 12<sup>th</sup> as Fire Prevention Week in Illinois encouraging residents to learn, prepare and practice for emergencies.

This year's theme is "Not Every Hero Wears A Cape. Plan and Practice your Escape." Fire Prevention Week is observed every year during the week of October 9<sup>th</sup> commemorating the 1871 Great Chicago Fire that killed more than 250 people and left 100,000 homeless. The fire burned over 2,000 acres and destroyed more than 17,000 structures.

Even today, with all the advances in technology, seconds can mean the difference between life and death in a fire emergency. OSFM is encouraging fire departments and first responders to engage in fire prevention and preparedness outreach to their local communities, not only during fire prevention week, but every opportunity that they have. Typically, fire prevention messages and outreach in local communities have been focused on elementary students. Adults, young adults and the elderly are groups that are often overlooked. Re-educating these groups can help to bring a focus back to fire safety, especially for college students who are starting to live on their own for the first time. This could mean the difference, for some, of escaping safely from a fire or tragedy occurring.

Fire doesn't discriminate and can occur anywhere and anytime. Holding a family meeting and coming up with a plan is vital to creating a fire-safe home. This October, please encourage the residents in your communities to practice their plan by holding a fire drill at home. Make sure family members know two exits out of every room and where a designated meeting spot is located outside of the home. Plan another drill during the year to serve as a reminder and refresher.

In 2018, Illinois fire departments responded to 32,480 fires, with 15,557 being residential fires. There were 118 fire related deaths reported statewide with 108 occurring due to residential fires making up 89 percent of deaths.

## Employee Spotlight



**Kathy Fairfield**  
**HR Specialist**

**Where are you originally from?** Born in Springfield, Illinois, but grew up in Athens, Illinois.

**Tell us about your family?** Married to my husband Michael Fairfield, proud dog parents to Whiskey, Malibu and Tequila and soon to be grandmother!

**Favorite Food(s)?** Cucumber, tomato, onion salad w/vinegar and Mexican food

**Hobbies?** Coloring books

**Favorite Book or Movie?** Movie-Shining Through

**When you get in the car what type of music will be coming out of your speakers?** 70's music

**What did you want to be when you were a kid?** Welder

**What's your favorite part of your job?** Free parking, unlimited ice and I feel safe thanks to all the first responders in the agency.

**What's something unique about you?** My love of travel and I am Scuba Certified up to 40 feet

**Where is your favorite place to vacation?** Cancun, Mexico

**Where is your bucket list destination?** Europe



*Dolly Proctor & Tequila Fairfield*

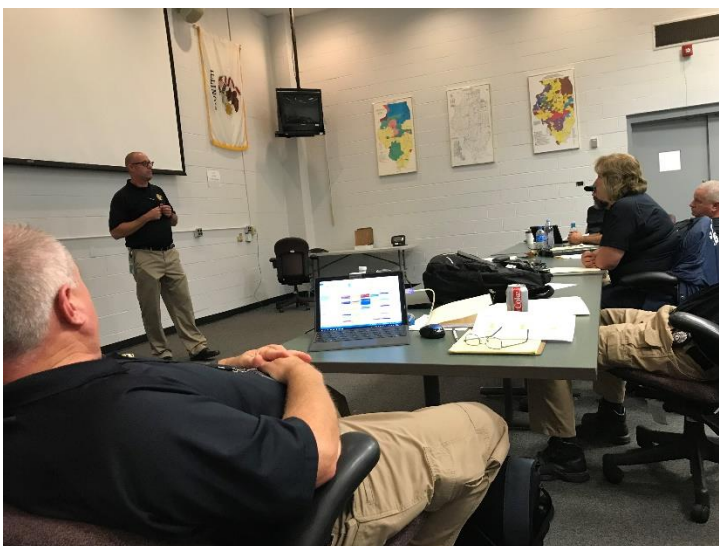


## Fire Prevention Division



*Fire Prevention Division Inspectors and Tech Services were in Springfield on September 11<sup>th</sup> for training.*

OSFM's Fire Prevention Division is referred to as the "backbone" of the agency. This division conducts inspections of buildings for compliance with the Life Safety Code. Efforts are primarily focused on state licensed day-cares, health care and educational occupancies, but the inspectors are also tasked with inspecting above ground tanks, LP Gas installations and hotel/motel occupancies.



The division is also responsible for enforcing the Fire Equipment Distributor and Employee Regulation Act, Fire Sprinkler Contractor Licensing Act, Pyrotechnic Operator and Distributor Licensing Act and the Furniture Fire Safety Act. The Division of Fire Prevention also inspects buildings and exhibits at all county fairs and the state fairs in Springfield and DuQuoin.

## Campus Fire Safety Event



OSFM honored Campus Fire Safety Month by visiting the University of Illinois-Springfield campus to promote fire safety. Governor JB Pritzker signed a proclamation honoring the month, making this the 14<sup>th</sup> straight year Illinois has participated in this initiative. Since 2000, there have been seven campus fire-related deaths in Illinois. The latest occurring less than three years ago in Carbondale on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.

The goal is to prevent common campus fires and reduce fire hazards. According to Campus Firewatch, 85% of college-related fire fatalities have happened in off-campus housing, where most students live. Smoking leads the way as the cause of fatal campus fires from 2000 to 2019.



*Left to Right: Brian Kelley UIS Director of Residence Life, UIS Chancellor Susan Koch and OSFM PIO JC Fultz*



*Fire Marshal Perez speaking in DeKalb  
(Photo: DeKalb Daily Chronicle)*



## Fire Prevention Week

“Not Every Hero Wears a Cape. Plan and Practice Your Escape” is the theme for Fire Prevention Week 2019. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recognizes the everyday people who motivate their households to develop and practice a home fire escape plan; these seemingly basic behaviors can have a life-saving impact. The message is even more important now since modern homes burn faster because of the use of synthetic materials.

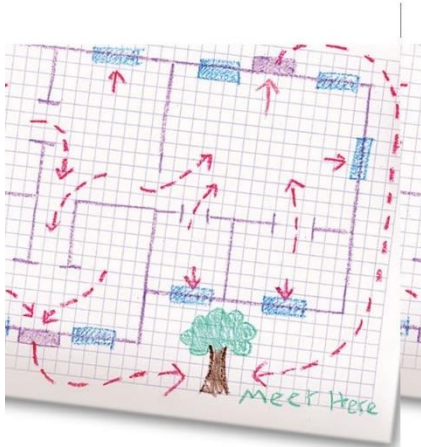


Fire Prevention Week is always observed on the Sunday through Saturday in which October 9<sup>th</sup> falls, in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire. The fire began on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1871, but most of the damage occurred on October 9<sup>th</sup>. The blaze killed 250 people, left 100,000 homeless and destroyed more than 17,400 structures. The legend says that a cow belonging to Mrs. O’Leary kicked over a lamp, starting the first barn on fire. Later accounts show that the reporter who published this story admitted he made it up. A forest fire in and around Peshtigo, Wisconsin also occurred on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1871, roaring through 16 northeastern Wisconsin towns killing 1,152 people and scorching 1.2 million acres, but was overshadowed by the Chicago fire.



In 1911, on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America (now International Fire Marshals Association) decided that the devastating fire was best observed in a way that helped promote fire prevention. In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation. President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the first National Fire Prevention Week October 4<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup>, 1925. United States Presidents have issued a proclamation each year since 1925 honoring the observance of Fire Prevention Week. According to the National Archives and Records Administration’s Library Information Center this is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The NFPA has been the official sponsor since 1922. More on the history of the fires and fire prevention week can be found here: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/ARCHIVED/Fire-Prevention-Week-old/About-Fire-Prevention-Week>

## Fire Prevention Week



OSFM encourages local fire departments to reach out to their communities, not only during fire prevention week, but through out the year. Elementary students are usually the ones who receive the most attention. It's important to reach out to and engage with every age group as some people haven't had a fire prevention education since elementary school. Last year, (2018) Illinois fire departments responded to 32,480 fires, with 15,557 of those being residential fires. Residential fire deaths accounted for 89% percent of all fire deaths.

Creating a fire-safe home starts with a simple conversation with your family during dinner or anytime. Come up with a plan that is easy to for everyone to understand.

### Have a Fire Drill!

- Push the smoke alarm button to start the drill.
- Practice using different ways out.
- Practice what to do in case there is smoke. Get low and go.
- Close doors behind you as you leave.
- Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people, pets, or personal belongings.
- Go to your outside meeting place where first responders can see you.

[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)



**FEMA**

U.S. Fire Administration



#### SAFETY TIPS

- » **MAKE** a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » **KNOW** at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » **HAVE** an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » **PRACTICE** your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » **PRACTICE** using different ways out.
- » **TEACH** children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » **CLOSE** doors behind you as you leave.

#### IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...

- » If the smoke alarm sounds, **GET OUT AND STAY OUT**. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, **GET LOW AND GO** under the smoke to your way out.
- » **CALL** the fire department from outside your home.

#### FACTS

- ! A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ! According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ! While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ! **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



Your Source for SAFETY Information  
NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

[www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education) ©NFPA 2016



**Fire Prevention Week**

# Smoke Alarms at Home

**SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART** of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.



## SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Current alarms on the market employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined.
- Today's smoke alarms will be more technologically advanced to respond to a multitude of fire conditions, yet mitigate false alarms.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

## FACTS

- ❗ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ❗ Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ❗ Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



*Smoke alarms are a key part to helping make for a fire safe home. Here are some important tips to keep in mind!*



## 10 Year Smoke Detector Law Awareness Event at Aurora Fire Department



*Fire Marshal Perez with Illinois Senator Linda Holmes of Aurora*

OSFM attended an event promoting the new 10-year smoke detector law that will require Illinois residents to replace old smoke detectors with the type that has a long term 10-year sealed battery by the end of 2022. This applies to alarms that have removable batteries or ones that are not hard wired.

*Fire Marshal Perez: "With the majority of fire-related deaths occurring in homes without working smoke alarms, this legislation was long overdue. People often have a false sense of security when it comes to fire safety. It is vital that the public is educated on this new law and can reach out to their local fire officials if they need assistance with installations."*

[Click here for more on the Smoke Detector Act](#)



*Left to right: Fire Marshal Perez, Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin and Aurora Fire Chief Gary Krientz*





## IEMA Training Summit



OSFM participated in the IEMA Training Summit in Springfield, September 3<sup>rd</sup> through September 5<sup>th</sup>. Emergency managers, first responders and others connected to the emergency management community gathered for several days of trainings. This year's theme was Partnerships in Action. Trainings ranged from response to school shootings, natural disasters, hazardous materials, emergency communication and more. OSFM had a booth in the exhibit hall where we distributed information and connected with people attending the conference.





## Hispanic Heritage Month Event



*Left to Right: Deputy Director Armstead, Secretary of State Jesse White and Fire Marshal Perez*

Fire Marshal Perez and Deputy Director Armstead paid tribute to Hispanic American Heritage Month by attending Secretary of State Jesse White's annual event in Chicago on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

National Hispanic Heritage Month runs from Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. This month is set aside every year to pay tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society. For more information you can visit: <https://www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov/>

## Campfire/Bonfire Safety

*Fall has arrived and so will cool/crisp evenings. A campfire or bonfire is a popular way to enjoy this time of year. Roasting hotdogs and marshmallows go hand in hand with a fire. Keeping safety tips in mind should be a top priority as accidents can happen causing injuries. Here are some tips so that your Fall bonfire/campfire will be fun and safe.*

### Campfire Safety

Sitting under the stars by a crackling fire has its appeal. It's where stories are told, sing-a-longs happen, and meals are cooked over an open flame. Campfires bring family and friends together. But campfire mishaps can cause injuries. With a few safety tips, you can prevent these accidents.

#### SAFETY AROUND THE FIRE

- Before setting up a campfire, be sure it is permitted. Check with your local fire department.
- If campfires are permitted, they need to be at least 25 feet away from any structure and anything that can burn.
- Clear away dry leaves and sticks, overhanging low branches and shrubs.
- Avoid burning on windy, dry days. It is easier for open burning to spread out of control when it is windy and dry.
- Watch children while the fire is burning. Never let children or pets play or stand too close to the fire.
- Attend to the campfire at all times. A campfire left alone for only a few minutes can grow into a damaging fire.
- Keep a campfire small which is easier to control.
- Never use gasoline or other flammable or combustible liquids.
- Always have a hose, bucket of water, or shovel and dirt or sand nearby to put out the fire. Make sure to put it completely out before leaving the site.
- If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll. Stop, drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out.
- Treat a burn right away. Cool the burn with cool water for 3 to 5 minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Get medical help if needed.



#### ROAST WITH CARE

If roasting marshmallows, help young children. Never shake a roasting marshmallow. It can turn into a flying, flaming ball. A heated metal skewer can cause burns.

#### FACT

Campfire accidents send thousands of people to emergency rooms with burn injuries every year.



**NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**  
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards



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## Halloween Safety



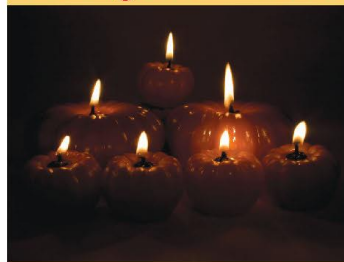
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### HALLOWEEN FIRE SAFETY TIPS

- »» **When choosing a costume**, stay away from long trailing fabric. If your child is wearing a mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so he or she can see out.
- »» **Provide children** with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume.
- »» Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper catch fire easily. **Keep all decorations** away from open flames and other heat sources like light bulbs and heaters.
- »» **Use a battery-operated** candle or glow-stick in jack-o-lanterns. If you use a real candle, use extreme caution. Make sure children are watched at all times when candles are lit. When lighting candles inside jack-o-lanterns, use long, fireplace-style matches or a utility lighter. Be sure to place lit pumpkins well away from anything that can burn and far enough out of the way of trick-or-treaters, doorsteps, walkways and yards.
- »» **Remember** to keep exits clear of decorations, so nothing blocks escape routes.
- »» **Make sure** all smoke alarms in the home are working.
- »» **Tell children** to stay away from open flames including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them. Be sure they know how to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches fire. (Have them practice, stopping immediately, dropping to the ground, covering their face with hands, and rolling over and over to put the flames out.)

If your children are going to **Halloween parties** at others' homes, have them look for ways out of the home and plan how they would get out in an emergency.

#### Did you know?



Decorations are the first thing to ignite in **900** reported home fires each year. Two of every five of these fires were started by a candle.



**Your Source for SAFETY Information**

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

[www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education) ©NFPA 2016

*Halloween is a time for decorations, costumes, parties and fun! There are some important safety tips to keep in mind when turning your house into a spooky haunt or selecting that right costume!*

*OSFM wants to wish you all a safe and happy Halloween!*

## Making A Difference

*I wanted to thank all those who did such a great job of representing our agency at the Springfield and DuQuoin State Fair Parades, at the Fire Museum, our Fire Safety Tent, at the Governor's Tent, setting up and taking down our displays and being good hosts to our outside volunteers. Your effort to further our public outreach and provide fire prevention education is greatly appreciated and by all appearances enjoyed by everyone that attended. Greg and Robin did another outstanding job this year working tirelessly to make sure that everything went off without a hitch! **Fire Marshal Perez***



*You have made working with OSFM as easy as possible during this busy time. I don't believe that it could have done better. Sorry if I've been a pain with all of my questions and communications, but you always got back to me with a good answer in a timely fashion. I'm sure you will do just as well in your new job. Best of luck. **Ed Angell***

### Messages about Fred Schneller

*Just got word that you are moving on to a new position. Thank You for always doing your best to assist us with our work. You have done great things there. It has been a pleasure to work with you. Thank You & Good Luck! **Bob Sumoski***

*You did a great job. Thank you for all the help you gave me. Good Luck. **Bill Fleishli***



## Kids' Corner

*All but one of these jolly jack-o'-lanterns matches another jack in the pack. Can you find all the pumpkin pairs?  
There are eight and one lone pumpkin.*



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